

THE LEWIS CARROLL SOCIETY



OF NORTH AMERICA

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FALL 1986 MEETING IN BOSTON

Directly across Copley Square from Boston's Trinity Church stands the Boston Public Library, one of the oldest and finest of the great public libraries in the United States. On Nov. 15, a sunny and cool Saturday, more than sixty-five members and guests of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America arrived at the Boston Public Library to conduct our annual fall meeting thanks to the generous hospitality of Dr. Laura V. Monti, Keeper of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Library. A luncheon, really an extremely well attended and very fine one at the Lenox Hotel, preceded the general meeting which began at 1:45 p.m. in the auditorium of the new wing of the library.

After the President summarized the minutes from our last meeting held at the Donnell Library in New York City, which were accepted as presented, the meeting approved all of the amendments to our constitution first proposed in *Knight Letter* 22. We honored our loyal and extremely hard working Secretary, Maxine Schaefer, and our diligent, always creative Program Chairperson, Janet Jurist, by presenting them each with a plaque in recognition of their many years of selfless service to LCSNA. Were it not for the efforts of these two wonderful people our society would not be the success it has become today. Next a moment of silence was observed in memory of LCSNA member Dr. Lall Montgomery who died last Oct. in Indiana. Then our slate of officers was nominated and duly elected: President, Professor Edward Guiliano; Vice President, Ms. Ellen Luchinsky; Treasurer, Mr. Ray Wapner; Secretary, Mrs. Maxine Schaefer. On behalf of the Boston Public Library, Dr. Laura V. Monti extended a formal welcome to us and our speakers' program began.

Artist Barry Moser, who last spoke to us when we met at Harvard University's Houghton Library in 1981, was our first speaker. After reading brief greetings from Dr. Selwyn H. Goodacre, who was unable to journey from Britain to join us in Boston, Barry began his illustrated talk entitled "Alice and Dorothy: A Comparison." The illustrations, of course, were from Barry's own 1982 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, his 1983 *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*, and his 1986 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, all of which he produced in exquisite editions for his Pennyroyal Press and then issued in trade editions through the University of California Press. Barry basically sees Dorothy as a kind of American Alice with many points of similarity and contrast in the three stories. Alice is a comparatively well-off child whereas Dorothy is a poor child of America's midwestern plains. Alice's world, in Barry's view, appears rather claustrophobic in contrast to the frontier from which Dorothy comes and those to which she journeys. But both children, Dorothy and Alice, begin a solitary journey: Dorothy is drawn up through a funnel-shaped hole and Alice falls down a funnel-shaped hole. Barry had so much more to say about the animal figures, monstrous figures, the role of male figures (e.g., the White Knight and the Wizard) that I shall not try to summarize. We hope Barry will publish his well considered interpretations together with a selection of the marvelous illustrations on which they are based. I can not resist, however, adding that Barry has used his daughter as the model for his Alice (and she does bear a more than passing resemblance to Alice Liddell) and his Dorothy!

Doris Frohnsdorf, a founding member of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America who last spoke to us at our New York City meeting in 1980 at the Joseph L. Lubin House of Syracuse University, was heartily welcomed as our second speaker. In the tradition of the scholastic philosophers, Doris began by quoting a text from an authority in opposition to the thesis she wished to defend. The authority from the past in this case was John Locke and the text was taken from Locke's June 9, 1704, letter to Anthony Collins: "Books seem to me to be pestilent things, and infest all that trade in them; that is, all but one sort of men, with something very perverse and brutal. Printers, binders, sellers, and others that make a trade and gain out of them; have universally so odd a turn of mind, that they have a way of dealing peculiar to themselves, and not conformed to the good of society, and the general fairness that cements mankind." *Sed contra*, Doris, who has been a bookseller for the past twenty years, argued from her own experience in helping collectors large or small to build their collections that booksellers, who love

their books and their customers' interests with a proper appreciation, do in fact work hard to cement the bonds of association, and often friendship, in the wonderful world of collecting. Doris shared with us some of her memories of happy success and other memories, such as one dealing with the fate of a first edition of Nabokov's translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which was not so pleasing. The high level of accurate bibliographic description is, Doris rightly argued, an absolute measure of a bookseller's usefulness. Her own catalog No. 29, I believe, exemplifies many of the virtues the novice or experienced collector desires in a catalog. In concluding her presentation Doris offered three small door prizes of contemporary Alician ephemera, and thereby underscored the pervasiveness of Carroll's influence not only in the United Kingdom and the United States, but also on the Continent, and I suppose beyond.

From Paris, Alexandre Reverend came to discuss and play tape recordings of "Contemporary Musical Settings of Lewis Carroll's Songs." The songs: "How doth the little crocodile," "Beautiful soup," "The walrus and the carpenter," etc. are of course familiar enough from Carroll's text, but what of the melodies to which they were set? Alexandre Reverend had traveled to Oxford to find the original scores. He played selections of the compositions by William Boyd, J.M. Sayles, Charles Hutchinson, and others. Mr. Reverend provided a brief introduction to each of the selections which were heard first in their present rendition at the Theatre de la Ville in Paris in the performance of Frederic Reverend's production "Le Sacre d'Alice." Our audience was extremely interested in this aspect of Carroll's work and grateful to Mr. Reverend for bringing it to their attention. (For information on availability of the tape, write: Mr. Alexandre Reverend, 79 Rue Damremont, 75018 Paris, France.)

THE PRINTED PAGE:

Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There with 22 new illustrations by Justin Todd has been published by Victor Gallancz Ltd. (London, 1986. about \$12.60). This nicely produced book is a companion to Justin Todd's 1984 illustrated edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Jacques Roubaud's French translation *La chasse au Snark* appeared last year in the Demi-mots series published by Editions Ramsay (9 rue du Cherche-Midi, 75006, Paris). No illustrations.

The Nov. 17, 1986 issue of *AB Bookman's Weekly* features on its cover a Carroll copy of a Tenniel drawing of the Cheshire Cat perched above the Mad Hatter's tea party and includes an account of how the nine drawings given to Alice by Carroll perhaps in the spring of 1865 were thought to be the work of John Tenniel until Justin G. Schiller identified them as Carroll's own work in Oct. 1979. The drawings, bound into an album about 1880, came up for auction at Christie's on Dec. 3, 1986. The same issue of *AB Bookman's Weekly* also contains an article by Justin Schiller entitled "Children's Books at Auction During the Past Year."

Artist Jane Breskin Zalben illustrated *The Walrus and the Carpenter* (New York, Henry Holt and Co. 1986. \$13.95). Her Walrus and oysters are wonderful but the Tweedles, in your editor's opinion, did not quite seem right—too epicene. Ms. Zalben's illustrated *Jabberwocky* appeared in 1977.

The Walrus and the Carpenter and Other Remarkable Rhymes containing Julian Doyle's illustrations was brought out by Templar Publishing in the United Kingdom and in this country is available from Salem House Publishers (Topsfield, Mass. 1986. \$12.95). It also includes "A-Sitting on a Gate," "You Are Old, Father William," "Jabberwocky," and four other songs. Doyle's carpenter looks menacingly arch but his Jabberwock resembles one of those balloons twisted into a not very convincing animal shape.

British scientists Anthony Holley and Paul Greenwood observed in the magazine *Nature* that "the March Hare really wasn't mad, but only excited, as hares are wont to be, about the spring mating season."

The Book of the Month Club offered the recent Macmillan facsimile edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* for \$13.95.

A few months ago a reader of the *Knight Letter* came across James Thurber's delightful essay "What Do You Mean It Was Brillig?" which can be recommended although it contains a few remarks that may be considered out of place today. It's in the volume *A Thurber Carnival*.

A flyer from *Harper's Magazine*, Spring 1986, reads "Dear Reader: It seems that virtually everyone has written for *Harper's Magazine*—Charles Dickens, Stephen Crane, Lewis Carroll, (et al)—to name just a few." *Harper's* then offers a book as a subscription gift, *An American Retrospective, Writing from Harper's Magazine, 1850-1984*. However, no Carroll items are included in the giveaway.

Professor Morton N. Cohen's insightful essay "Lewis Carroll and Victorian Morality" is available in the book *Sexuality and Victorian Literature* edited by Don Richard Cox and issued as volume 27 of *Tennessee Studies in Literature* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1984. clothbound \$21.95 or paper \$10.95, plus 50¢ postage and handling).

In another essay, entitled "Another Wonderland: Lewis Carroll's *The Nursery 'Alice'*", Professor Cohen defends that work, traditionally regarded as a poor sister to the Alice books, as a new artistic creation appropriately suited for children's literature. (*The Lion and the Unicorn*, Vol. 7/8, 1983-84).

A cricket Test match covered by Humpty Dumpty? That is precisely what Miles Kington offers in his June 13, 1986 "Moreover" column in *The Times* of London.

Arnold M. Auerbach's parody of "Jabberwocky" called, appropriately, "Broadway Jabberwocky" appeared in the Nov. 1986 issue of *Playbill* (Vol. 86, No. 11, p. 61). It begins " 'Twas Mamet and the Streepy glooms."

"Alice in Murderland" is a two-part article by Frank McSherry which appears in *The Armchair Detective*, Volume 19, Nos. 2 and 3. (159 West 56th Street, NY, NY 10019, \$6 each, or your local mystery bookshop). Mr. McSherry's thesis is that Carroll and Mrs. Hargreaves are somehow invoked or involved in mysterious disappearances which have occurred over the years. He reviews some of the books and articles which are Carroll (or Alice) related, in some detail. Unfortunately he seems unaware of Byron Sewell's monumental *Alice in Modern Crime Fiction* (Chicken Little Press, Houston, 1983) which is several orders of magnitude more extensive.

"That Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin should join in a petition to the Crown to grant a charter for a Women's University" was the conclusion reached by Charles L. Dodgson in his 1896 pamphlet *Resident Women Students*. Professor Morton N. Cohen examines this pamphlet and Carroll's attitude toward female higher education in his paper "Lewis Carroll and the Education of Victorian Women" which was included in *Nineteenth-Century Women Writers of the English-Speaking World* (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1986), \$35.00.

Political cartoonists continue to draw on Carrollian figures and themes for their comments on current events. One of the better ones was Stuart Carlson's Mad Hatter's teaparty send up of the Iceland summit conference and the Daniloff affair in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, reprinted in the Oct. 12, 1986 *New York Times*.

Senator William Proxmire also drew on Carroll in his remarks on the budget which were printed in the June 19, 1986 *Congressional Record*: "Mr. President, the myth of the day is that Congress is serious about reducing the deficit. The truth is that Lewis Carroll, who wrote "Alice in Wonderland," had our number when he penned the line, "The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday, but never jam today."

Stanford Lawyer, Vol. 21, No. 1 for Fall 1986 published "The Venturesome Women of Stanford Law, 1920-1945" by Leelane Ellis Hines. There is a full-page illustration of Alice (after Tenniel) looking for the little door to the garden—except that the door has been replaced by a Stanford Quad covered walk. A six-page article follows with more Tenniel drawings, unretouched, and Carrollian quotations. The essay is concerned with the women who came to the Law School in those earlier years "venturing (like Lewis Carroll's Alice) into a land of curious ambiguity."

The Food Lover's Book of Lists (New American Library, 1979) contains a Lewis Carroll menu from his food creations in the Alice books as interpreted by Patricia Altobello and Deirdre Pierce.

Stan Marx and Edward Guiliano report that the Society's ambitious project to publish all of Lewis Carroll's pamphlets is proceeding on schedule with the first volume, edited by Edward Wakeling, to cover the Oxford pamphlets. Stan and Ed, who are serving as editors of the project, would be grateful for any information on Carroll pamphlets held by members. Please write to: Mr. Stan Marx, 15 Sinclair Martin Dr., Roslyn, NY 11576.

CARROLLIAN COMPUTING:

Microtimes, a California computer magazine, reviewed the Windham Classics "Alice in Wonderland" computer game in the March-April 1986 issue.

Does anyone know of any additional items of Carrollian interest in the computer world?

ARTS AND OTHER NEWS:

Patricia Montley's play *Alice in Collegeland* for six players is available from the Theatre Department, Chatham College, Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15242. It includes brief production notes, prop list, and suggested costume designs for the Mad Adder, the Metaphor Mouse, the Pressure Cat and the other characters young Alice encounters at a college admissions fair.

On Sept. 30 and Oct. 7, the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute offered as the first of six colloquia on psychoanalysis "Alice in Wonderland." Richard Shore, M.D. and Carol Christ, Ph.D. presented clinical material as a basis for exploring psychoanalytic and literary aspects of Alice and Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. The program was open to faculty and advanced graduate students.

Dec. 23, 1986 marked the centenary of the first stage production of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* at London's Prince of Wales theater.

The 1985 film *Dreamchild*, directed by Gavin Millar with Coral Browne as the elderly Alice and Ian Holm as Dodgson, is now available on video cassettes for \$79.95 through the better video stores.

Kevin Moore has taken *Crocodiles in Cream*, David Horlock's portrayal of Carroll for a single actor drawing on Carroll's diaries, letters, poems, and stories, to Turkey for five well received performances. Moore next takes *Crocodiles in Cream* to Ireland and then on to Greece!

From 1923 to 1927, Walt Disney made 57 Alice comedies as silent films according to Dave Smith, archivist for the Walt Disney Company. Although the films do seem to be named after Carroll's Alice, they bear little if any resemblance to the Alice books. Alice was played by Virginia Davis and later by Margie Gay. The Disney archives own prints of 30 of the films.

Capitola, California, held its annual begonia festival on Sept. 8th. The theme was Alician and so were the performances. The parade of begonia floats travelled down Soquel Creek, but many motors malfunctioned and had to be pulled along by swimmers. The winner was a Jabberwock float, 30 feet long and 14 feet tall. It was comprised of some 15,000 begonia blossoms. Others floats were the Dodo, the Tweedles, at least five Alices, and many others. Homes, offices, and commercial buildings in Capitola were also decorated with Wonderland and Looking-Glass themes in flowers, though excuses were made for not having a White Knight because of a scarcity of white begonias. 15,000 visitors watched the sixteen floats.

The Puppet Company opened its fifth season with *Through the Looking-Glass* at the Capital Children's Museum in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 4, 1987. Alice, Humpty Dumpty, the Tweedles and all the others came to life as marionettes, rod puppets, hand puppets and foot puppets.

On March 10, 1986 the State Opera of South Australia presented the world premiere of Peter and Martin Wesley-Smith's *Boojum* at the Scott Theater in Adelaide. It was directed by Gale Edwards with a cast of Peter Cousens, Brian Harrison, Valerie Bader, Christine Douglas, Waldemar Gorcki, Roger Howell, Jenny Vuletic and The Phones. In spite of a Caterpillar who shed his skin, Queen Elizabeth II reportedly "enjoyed it very much."

The Strybing Arboretum in San Francisco, Calif., presented "The Horticulturist's Alice: A Garden Tour of Wonderland" on Sept. 23, 1986. Robert Hornback, expanding on his article "A Garden Tour of Wonderland" which appeared in *Pacific Horticulture*, Fall 1983, used slides, music, and narrative to guide visitors through the lands created by Lewis Carroll.

The Paragon, Tom Harvey Road, Westerley, Rhode Island, 02891 offers the Wiggins illustrated AAIW along with a stuffed cotton Cheshire Cat pillow. Pillow is 10"x22" by Toy Works. \$18.50.

The Achenbach Foundation for the Graphic Arts at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, showed a collection of 19th Century photographs, August-November, 1986. No. 15 was a portrait of Xie Kitchin by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.

Fordsham and Halton Local Post is a private postal service in Great Britain which is allowed to compete freely with the Royal Mail. On Nov. 18, 1986 the Local Post issued four stamps (10p, 50p, 80p, and L1) to commemorate the Dec. 23rd centenary of the stage adaption of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* with designs featuring Alice, Lewis Carroll, and various wonderland characters. Information on ordering may be obtained from Fordsham and Halton Local Post, 6 Helston Close, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7, 6AA, England.

Joel Birenbaum's collectors' network for those interested in trading or selling Carrollian items is functioning. Interested parties should send their want and/or duplicates list to: Joel Birenbaum, 2486 Brunswick Circle, Woodbridge, IL 60517.

John Wilcox-Baker reports much progress with the establishment of the Lewis Carroll Birthplace Trust in Daresbury. Many legal hurdles have been cleared and the first formal meeting of the Trust Council was scheduled for January 20/22, 1987 in Daresbury.

Our spring 1987 meeting is scheduled for April 25 in the Edgar Allan Poe Room of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, MD. Program details will be forthcoming.

With thanks to our contributors, especially Earl Abbe, Alice Berkey, Sandor Burstein, Morton N. Cohen, Johanna Hurwitz, V.A. Lanza, Kenn Oultram, John V. Paull, L. Posner, E.S. Rutledge—and everyone else.